Nelle T. McLaughlin
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Pocahontas County

Chapter 6 - Section 1 & 2

Marvin Chapel - 1878

Marvin Chapel (M. E. Church South) is located on the State Highway Route # 219 about one and one-half miles above Mill Point.

The land for the church was given by Jacob F. and Mary Cackley and the Deed was made February 17, 1877 to Joseph Smith, Wm. H. Overholt, Granville McNeel, Henry N. McClure, Thos. I. Courtney, Isaac B. Smith, George Hill, Michael Scales, and Wm. Clendenen, Sr., Trs. for M. E. Church South, one acre of land for a house of Divine worship, for the use of the ministry and membership of the M. E. Church South, Provided: that in case of division or disruption of said Methodist Episcopal Church South, that then the property shall be under the control of the majority of the vote of the male membership of the said church over the age of twenty-one.

Before the Civil War, John H. Ruckman owned this land and selected this site for the church, but he moved to Georgia at the beginning of the Civil War. The idea of a church was dispensed with at that time and later the land was given by Mr. Cackley and his wife.

Clark Wooddell built the church and many of the members assisted in the building. The people also gave what money they could. Joseph Smith took several men and went to Cummings Creek to get white pine logs from which he sawed the

siding for the church. The church is 30 by 50 feet and the seats, pulpit and railing are all made of walnut.

Before the Civil War, John H. Ruckman built a log school house and services were held here until the War. Then in 1868 when another school house was built, services were held in that.

Marvin Chapel was built in 1878 and was dedicated on November 11, 1878. The Rev. A. P. Boud was to have preached the dedicatory sermon but was waterbound on his way to the church and the sermon was preached by the Rev. J. R. Van Horn, a circuit rider, who served this section at that time.

Mr. Renick Ruckman, who gave me this information, says the first preacher that he can remember was Rev. Joyce, who m married his sister in 1872. When the school house was built in 1868, Rev. Joyce preached here.

The next preacher was Rev. Baldwin, who also preached in the school house. Mr. Ruckman remembers one incident very well concerning the Rev. Baldwin. There had been a very dry spell and the farmers were needing rain badly. This particular Sabbath morning was a beautiful day with not a cloud in the sky. Rev. Baldwin offered up such a fervent prayer for rain that before the service was concluded, the rain was pouring down.

Rev. Van Horn came in the spring of 1875 and was here when the church was built.

The following list of ministers is perhaps not in order

but is as nearly correct as Mr. Ruckman could remember.

Rev. V. W. Wheeler
" Townsend
" Dills
" Lynch
" York
" Graybeal
" Armstrong
" Whitsell
" Adkins
" C. C. Lambert
" Neal
" Gooddall
" Eye
" W. F. Lowance
" Kent Swecker
" Wagner
" Hypes
" Karacuff
A. C. Pugh
" J. H. Light
" Kessler
" L. S. Shires, who serves the church at the present time.

Among the first members of the church were the following:

Pocahontas County

Joseph S. Smith
Abigail Smith
Thomas Courtney
Henry N. McClure
Michael Scales
Esther Caroline Scales
Millard Ruckman
Isaac B. Smith
Wm. Clendenen, Sr.
G. L. Auldridge
Renick Ruckman

The preachers were paid as they are today, by subscription and with food. Mr. Ruckman said that the salaries in those days were very small and that they were frequently unable to pay the full amount promised.

All denominations worshipped in this church at first. The Methodists held services twice per month and the Presbyterians once. Everyone attended all the services.

At the present time there are two services each month, one morning and one evening. The membership of the church is about sixty persons.

Marvin Chapel is situated in a very large oak grove. Years ago they had big meetings, all day services, and picnic dinners in the grove.

There has always been a Sunday School here. The present Supt. is Mrs. Walter Arbogast. The enrollment in

is about eighty.

Marvin Chapel is well known for its song services. They are held the year around on the third Sunday afternoon. Choirs from all around the county go there to sing. Mr. Fred Ruckman has charge of these services.

Each Sunday morning when they have no preaching services, they have prayer meeting.

The stewards in this church are: Mr. Kenny Hogsett, Mr. Richard Muldridge, Mr. Boyd Dilley and Mr. Wilbur Moore.

The Ladies' Aid Society was organized fifteen years ago with Mrs. Fred Ruckman as the first president. Mrs. Ruckman is president at the present time. This is a very active organization. They have recently painted the church, bought a piano, installed lights. They keep the church in good repair. Two silver collection plates were given to the church by Mr. Wallace Snedegar and Mr. Don Harper of Elkins. Since this society has been organized, they have never missed a single meeting.

In 1928 the Marvin Chapel congregation held their fiftieth anniversary. They had an all day service, dinner on the ground and a song service in the afternoon.

Rev. I. S. Chires is the present pastor and very much liked. He was educated at Concord College and Hampden Sidney College. He came here from Iron Gate, Virginia. He has six churches on his charge, Marvin

Chapel, Millsboro, Seebert, Sharon, Emmanuel, and Trinity. He lives in the Methodist parsonage at Millsboro. Mr. Shires is not a stranger around here as he served at Greenbank some years ago.

Information: Mr. Renick Ruckman who remembered when the church was built.

Mrs. Walter Arbogast

Rev. L. S. Shires